governmental accounts, keeping watch over state property and the construction of public buildings, supervising the ceremonies on formal occasions to be sure that they were properly conducted, and joining with two others of the central bodies as a high court of review for a large range of cases. Naturally, there was a subdivision of duties among its members.

The censors expressed their criticisms in the form of memorials to the throne. Theoretically, they were given great liberty^of speech. In practice, too, they were often fearless. However, censors did not rank very high in the official scale. Moreover, a censor might be punished for his pains. Yet during the Ch'ihg dynasty only about half a hundred such penalties are recorded. Timid censors might fear to speak, or occasionally one might use his position to bring embarrassment to an enemy. On the whole, public opinion, as voiced by the articulate classes (usually scholars and officials), rallied to the support of a censor whose strictures were well founded.

Another body was the *Tung Cheng Ssu,* or Office of Transmission, whose function it was to open, record, and transmit memorials on routine business. Still another was the *Ta Li Ssu,* or Grand Court of Revision, which exercised a general supervision over the administration of the criminal law. It, the"B6ard ~bf Punishments, and the Censorate were known as the "Three Supreme Tribunals." They met together as a court of appeal, to which all verdicts of capital punishment were sent up for review.

These nine bodies, sometimes called the Nine Chief Ministries of State, by no means exhausted the central bureaus in Peking. There was the *Li Fan Yuan,* sometimes inaccurately called, in ^English, the Colonial Office, which had charge of

most of Mongolia, Tibet, and Sinkiang. There was the famous *Hanlin Yuan,* rather freely translated as the Imperial Academy. Admission^ it was reserved to those who had stood high in the civil service examinations, and so was esteemed a great honor. It also served to provide posts for some who had not yet been appointed to other offices in the bureaucracy, and formed a kind of springboard to desirable posts. Its functions were literary, such^as-ihe expounding of the Classics, the preparation of official documents, and the composition and preservation of elaborate records, especially of the words and actions of the Emperor, from which the